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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000582

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PRT-WASIT: UPDATE FROM WASIT POLICE CHIEF

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Wade Weems for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

¶1. (U) This is a PRT-Wasit reporting cable.

¶2. (S/NF) Summary. Wasit Iraqi Police (IP) Chief, Major General Abdul Haninn Hamud expects Sadrists to honor the Muqtada al Sadr (MAS) ceasefire extension, but expressed the need to mount operations with CF in Jaysh al Mahdi (JAM)-controlled neighborhoods. Haninn described the CF-trained Al Kut SWAT (KSWAT) and Special Response Team (SRT) as the most tactically proficient units in the Wasit IP force, noting that they received high marks in recent IP training exercises observed by MOI and CF officials. Haninn expects little support from the Governor or the Provincial Council and stated that several PC members actively work against him. He suspects some provincial government officials triggered a recent MOI investigation of a detainee release that he had authorized, though Haninn expects easy exoneration. End summary.

¶3. (S/NF) On 12 Feb, Haninn told PRT and 214 FB XO that internal splits in the Sadrists movement would not jeopardize the ceasefire. Regarding potential operations against JAM strongholds - operations which are encouraged by provincial leadership - MGH said "I am ready," but emphasized that "American support" would be vital for success. (Note. Current CF units supporting Wasit IP are Police Transition Teams (PTTs) and a USSF Operational Detachment Alpha. End note.)

¶4. (S/NF) MGH noted with pride that in a 06 Feb training exercise observed by MOI officials and CF trainers, Wasit IP units performed exceptionally well. He described KSWAT as the most effective unit, and acknowledged that KSWAT CDR Lt Aziz is the most tactically-proficient IP leader. When informed that government officials and local citizens regularly describe incidents in which Aziz's KSWAT intimidates and abuses citizens and engages in corrupt practices, Haninn admitted to a lack of control over Aziz and attributed this to Aziz's relationship with CF. According to Haninn, Aziz does not report through the IP command when conducting operations with CF, which he says are numerous. (Note. USSF have done no kinetic operations in recent weeks with Lt Aziz, suggesting that Aziz is often acting without oversight from either Haninn or CF. Additional PRT reporting on the political implications of KSWAT actions is forthcoming. End note.)

¶5. (S/NF) Haninn refuted allegations that he knelt to pressure from a powerful tribal leader and released a dangerous detainee. The detainee, Ali Kharen Walleed, was arrested in Al Hay, and transferred to Al Kut, but an influential Shayikh notified Haninn that IPs had detained the wrong person, and that Ali's father and brother were wanted, not Ali. Haninn investigated this claim and immediately ordered Ali's release. Governor Abd Latif al Turfa, Haninn alleged, called Vice President Adil Mehdi to trigger the MOI investigation, in hopes that Haninn would be relieved.

(Note. The Governor did not support Haninn's appointment as IP Chief, backing instead MG Khalid, the Provincial Joint Coordination Center (PJCC) Director and a Badr Organization Colonel. End note.) Haninn confidently predicts that the "administrative" MOI investigation will exonerate him.

¶6. (S/NF) Comment: MG Haninn has the most demanding job in Wasit. He must reform a bloated, militia-infiltrated IP force, contend with chronic shortages in the supply of weapons, ammunition and vehicles, pursue strong militia forces, and protect allies, family and himself. Meanwhile his ranks are filled with subordinates loyal to Badr or various JAM factions, and different political, tribal and CF leaders simultaneously pressure him to pursue or not pursue certain targets, according to their interests. Finally, legislative and executive officials, acting on behalf of a variety of interests, constantly maneuver to discredit and discard Haninn.

¶7. (S/NF) Comment C't'd: MG Haninn has a reputation for strict adherence to the rule of law, dating back to his last tenure as IP Chief in 2004-2005. He has expressed repeatedly his hatred for militias and for Iranian influences in Wasit. Given his views, one would expect Haninn to use his position as IP Chief to aggressively battle the insurgency. However, in Wasit, counterinsurgency is something of a misnomer as the fabric of political power is woven with strands of sympathy and acquiescence to various Sadrist, Badr, militia and Iranian interests. Haninn may appear slow in transforming the IP force and passive in pursuing militia, but he is under immense pressure to negotiate his every step with multiple, conflicting powers. Understanding the currents of power and aiding Haninn to successfully navigate them is our best course of action, especially as his likely replacement, MG

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Khalid, would not be as independent, principled or committed to working with CF. End comment.
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